



LIFELINK NEWSLETTER

Page 1

Stay Cool Under Stress with
"Sailors on the Street"

Page 2

July Plan of the Week Notes,
Lifelink Spotlight

Page 3

Why Grit Matters, News and
Events

Stay Cool Under Stress with "Sailors on the Street"

Self-care isn't just important, it's essential.

Picture this: You're feeling overwhelmed at work. You have overdue projects piling up, both at work and at home. Perhaps you are deployed or deploying soon and your "to do" list feels endless. It seems like there aren't enough hours in the day, so you skip lunch one day. Then maybe you skip the gym the next, and then by Friday you have cut the number of hours you're sleeping to four hours per night.

Any of this sound familiar?

When we're stressed, self-care is typically the first thing to go, and that only makes matters worse. Good self-care can be a challenge for many and is unique for everyone, but overall includes basic activities that promote physical and emotional well-being.

Summer is a great time to stay cool by taking care of your mind, body and spirit, and by taking the time to re-evaluate, adjust and establish a cohesive self-care strategy and routine. And this summer, you can gain some inspiration and motivation from your shipmates.

Check out the *Every Sailor, Every Day* campaign's video series, "Sailor on the Street," featuring Sailors from around the fleet sharing some of their personal tips, hacks, opinions and personal experiences with stress, stress navigation and self-care. Real Sailors, giving their real take. All videos are also accompanied by Small ACTs and actionable steps that you can take to help navigate stress, such as reaching out to the [DoD BeThere Peer Support Call and Outreach Center](#) or doing a quick breathing exercise.

Hear some of the ways that your fellow Sailors help out their shipmates in need of stress relief in [episode one](#). Get suggestions on ways to maintain both psychological and physical fitness in [episode two](#). Learn what fellow Sailors have to say about handling stress, who they talk to and how Small ACTs can show your fellow Sailors that you care in [episode three](#). There are also 29-second versions of each video available on our YouTube page for sharing on social media.

Like all *Every Sailor, Every Day* products, these videos can be used at any time of year. They offer a fresh way to spark ongoing

dialogue about stress navigation and self-care by demonstrating how Sailors and their peers are already practicing healthy behaviors. Now that we're at the height of the 101 Critical Days of Summer, these videos can be incorporated into summer safety efforts, reminding Sailors that psychological safety is just as important as physical safety. They can also be used as ice breakers for local Operational Stress Control (OSC) and/or life-skills trainings or small group discussions.

Heat up your self-care routine so you can stay cool this summer. Even when it seems like every moment should be dedicated to work and personal responsibilities, take some time to incorporate healthy activities into your life that help you feel a little less stressed. And encourage your friends, family, and shipmates to do the same. Get out and do something for yourself with the people in your life you care about. Take a walk with a friend. Cook one of your favorite meals with a relative when you're home on liberty or leave. Work out with a shipmate who may be feeling like their plate is full. Or just be there to listen to someone who needs to talk. 1 Small ACT not only makes a difference in your life, but can make a difference in the lives of others as well.

For more useful tips on how to navigate stress and build a resilient Navy, check out the Navy Operational Stress Control blog [here](#). For other videos on small ACTs to help navigate stress, visit the YouTube page [here](#).



Lifelink Spotlight

De-stressing On a Canvas

Maybe crossword puzzles or word searches are your go-to stress relief activity. Or maybe you like to color intricate illustrations of mosaics in adult coloring books. For Sailors aboard the USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74), a “paint and dip” event held by the Second Class Petty Officer Association (SCPOA) proved to be a great stress buster.

Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Cymone Surrell-Morris helped coordinate the event as “an opportunity for Sailors to release creative energy and de-stress.” Inspired by paint and sip events, Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Garvin Williams, president of the SCPOA also took part in planning this event, but it was a little different than paint and sips. Instead of sipping wine, Sailors could dip nachos while releasing that creative energy on their canvases.

SCPOA provided the supplies—paint, brushes, canvases— as well as instruction for the unexpected number of Sailors from various rates and ranks who attended the event. The SCPOA aims to support command events that increase morale, so Stennis Sailors can look forward to more painting and crafting events in upcoming underway periods. “We will definitely have more during Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMTUEX) and of course deployment,” Williams said.

De-stressing and engaging in self-care are important for Sailors to maintain mission readiness. Small ACTs like participating in fun command events—and inviting a buddy along —can be a great way to navigate **operational stress** and be there for a fellow Sailor.

For Yeoman Seaman Manuel Gandia, the event definitely helped him find a time to relax. “With how stressful life can be on a ship, this event provided a calm setting that allowed me a moment to unwind.”

For more news on John C. Stennis, visit <http://www.stennis.navy.mil> or follow along on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/stennis74>.



Plan of the Week Notes

Below are sample Plan of the Week notes aligning with topics covered by the Every Sailor, Every Day campaign during the month of July:

1. The transitions of summer—PCS moves, deployments, and others—can be difficult to navigate. Luckily, the Navy and military partners have some great resources to make these transitions a bit easier to manage and help you move through them with resilience. Learn more at <https://navstress.wordpress.com/2018/06/25/beat-the-heat-of-summer-transition-stress-with-support/>.
2. Spending even a few minutes out in the sun during the hot summer months can drain your energy, especially if you are operating on an already limited sleep schedule. Did you know that fatigue can also impact your decision-making, memory, and stress response? Getting seven to eight hours of sleep per night and avoiding caffeine, large meals, and vigorous exercise before bedtime can help you get the optimal rest you need.
3. When experiencing chronic pain or the pain after an injury or surgery, prescription pain medications can be miracle workers. But improper use and disposal of these medications can jeopardize your health and your Navy career. With the right information, prescription drugs can be used safely. Check out the NavyNavStress blog for tips on playing it safe with prescription pain medications at <https://navstress.wordpress.com/2018/06/15/staying-safe-with-prescription-pain-medications/>.
4. Navigating psychological health concerns can be challenging, but there are resources available to help. The best thing you can do for yourself or a fellow Sailor is reach out for support. Find it 24/7 from the DoD BeThere Peer Support and Outreach Center, online at www.betherepeersupport.org or by phone at 1-844-357-7337.

Suicide Prevention Month Resources

The *Every Sailor, Every Day* campaign continues to promote its **1 Small ACT** message this upcoming Suicide Prevention Month to provide facts and tools to empower self-care, prevention and intervention for Sailors. The FY-19 1 Small ACT Toolkit, 2018 30 Days of Small ACTs calendar and other resources will be available on www.suicide.navy.mil by early August. Additionally, **Defense Suicide Prevention Office** (DSPO) will continue its recognition of an outstanding installation from each of the services for suicide prevention efforts and community engagement during Suicide Prevention Month. You can find nomination information in upcoming communications.

News and Resources

Preparing Your Finances
Before Deployment
[Real Warriors](#)

Reducing Self-Stigma: Mental
Health is as Important as
Physical Health
[Psychological Health Center of
Excellence](#)

Too Hot to Handle?
[Guard Your Health](#)

How to Drive Safely at Home
After Combat Duty
[Military OneSource](#)

Reduce Your Risk of Tick Bites
and Lyme Disease
[Human Performance Resource Center](#)

Preparing Your Family for
Emergencies—The Essentials
[Military OneSource](#)

How to Cope with Common
Causes of Loss
[Real Warriors](#)

Progress in Preventing Opioid
Abuse, More Needs to be Done
[Health.mil](#)

A Place for Complementary
and Integrative Health
Practices in the Treatment of
PTSD
[Psychological Health Center of
Excellence](#)

New DoD Mobile App Helps
Defuse Nightmares for Better
Sleep
[Defense Health Agency Connected
Health](#)

6 Ways to Lean on Your
Military Community to Settle
Into Your New Home Faster
[Military One Source](#)

Can Exercise Relieve Chronic
Pain?
[Human Performance Resource Center](#)

Current and Upcoming Events

Navy Safety Month
July
Resources available [here](#).

Dialogue with DSPO
July 11, 10 a.m. CDT
[Log in here](#)

SPC Training Webinars
July 12, 8 a.m. CDT
July 25, 2 p.m. CDT
[Register here](#)

Why Grit Matters

This article was contributed by the [Human Performance Resource Center](#).

Most people believe that talent and ability primarily enable peak performance and achievement. Emerging research shows that “grit”—a combination of effort and interest—also can predict success across a variety of domains, above and beyond your talents and skills. But what is grit? And is it possible to get more of it?



Grit is a psychological trait that shares some features with hardiness and mental toughness. It's often compared to one's ability to “suck it up and drive on” amid difficult situations. But grit is more than just your ability to plow ahead. It's defined primarily as persistence or your ability to endure and carry on in the face of challenges and adversity. An additional facet of grit is consistency of interest or passion. Gritty people often are intensely committed to top-level personal goals for what they want to accomplish in life.

Why does grit matter?

Warfighters already might be able to envision what those with grit might look like in terms of their attitudes and behaviors. Gritty people don't give up easily in the face of setbacks. They set goals, work hard, and stick with things until they achieve their desired end. Those who are high in grit aren't easily distracted by new ideas and projects, and their interests remain stable from year to year.

Some research suggests that grit might be a factor in performance, especially during stressful, challenging, and demanding events. Grit can predict academic achievement in college students and adults. It also has been shown to predict retention of cadets at the U.S. Military Academy (USMA) through their first year of grueling training and schoolwork. Grit might be able to predict how much effort and time someone is willing to commit to physical exercise as well.

How can I get more grit?

Some grit can be accounted for by your genetics and personality, but you still can work toward getting grittier. Try these strategies to boost your grit.

- **Practice, practice, practice.** You can grow your capacity to perform difficult tasks and develop your skills by practicing things in a disciplined manner. **Practice like you mean it** by engaging in focused and deliberate efforts to shore up weaknesses and make gradual progress every day.
- **Find (and remind yourself) of your purpose.** When what you do every day fits your interests, you're likely to feel more engaged and satisfied, perform better, and stay at your job longer than those whose interests aren't aligned. That might seem like an obvious connection, but even if your everyday duties aren't exactly what you're interested in, find ways to fuel your internal motivation. Ask yourself, “Why does this matter to me, and how does it matter to others and the world around me?”
- **Build optimism.** Cultivating **optimism** enables you to remain hopeful in the face of inevitable setbacks. Try to think of one of the grittiest people you know. Whether the person is an athlete, Warfighter, or someone in your family, you might notice that he or she worked through roadblocks by maintaining hope. Try to accurately attribute the causes of your successes and failures too. And know that even though you might not be where you want yet, there still are many opportunities ahead to get there.

The bottom line

Grit is a psychological factor that can contribute greatly to your chances of achieving success, and it can help you handle things and remain passionate in the face of setbacks. If you have children, visit HPRC's **Family Resilience** section for more tips on how to cultivate **grit in kids** too.